

REMARKS

Applicants, by the amendments presented above, have made a concerted effort to present claims which more clearly define over the prior art of record, and thus to place this case in condition for allowance.

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Drawings

In response to the Examiner's objections to the drawings, Applicant makes the following comments:

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- The "patient interface" no longer forms part of amended claim 10.
- Heating elements 15a and 15b are shown on amended FIG. 1. These are the preferred from of "electrical elements" which are referred to in amended claim 10.
- "Electrical means" is no longer referred to in amended claim 10.
- The "gaseous connection" which the Examiner refers to is a *condition* that occurs when the male portion and the female portion are brought together "in use said male and female portions connected so that a gaseous connection is formed". The "gaseous connection" is therefore **not** a part of the apparatus; it is a condition that occurs when the apparatus is in use. Therefore, it is not a "feature" *per se* and does not need to be specifically pointed to on the drawings.
- The Examiner has referred to element number 24, this being described in the specification as filed as the humidifier outlet. The humidifier outlet is

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also referred to as item **12** in the specification and the relevant description
has now been amended so that the outlet is now referred to consistently as
humidifier outlet **12**, shown on FIG. 1 as filed.

Replacements sheets are provided for FIGS. 1-4. No new matter has been included.

5 Entry of the drawings and withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Specification

The required correction has been made to page 2. Withdrawal of the objection to the
specification is requested.

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Claim Objections and Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claim 10 has been amended. Support for these amendments to claim 10 is contained in
the application as originally filed, as follows:

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■ The connector is now specified as “for use in a system for the delivery of
humidified pressurised gases”. As specified on page 3, lines 13-20, in one
form, the present invention is suitable for use “in a humidified CPAP
system”. There is therefore support for this amendment to claim 10.

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■ As specified on page 3, lines 13-20, the present invention relates to “a
connector that creates both an electrical and a gaseous connection between
two conduits”. There is therefore support for the amendment to claim 10,
which now states that “. . . said connector [is] adapted to couple a first

conduit to a second conduit to provide a gaseous connection and an electrical connection between first and second conduits . . .”

■ “Electrical members” has been amended so that this element of the claim now reads “first and second electrical **elements**”. As specified on page 4, line 31 through page 5, line 5, “heating element **30**” is disclosed. As specified on page 4, lines 6-12, additional electrical wires are disclosed, these being in addition to the heating element **30**. That is, the electrical wires are also elements. For consistency, all the electrical wireless in the conduits are now referred to in the claims as “elements”. Therefore, there is support for this amendment to claim 10.

■ The male and female portions are now specified as being “tubular”. Page 6, lines 13-18 describes an alternate embodiment with reference to FIGS. 5 and 6. The male connector **41** is described as “a tubular moulding”. Similarly, the female connector **42** is also described as being tubular. Although this particular section refers to the alternate embodiment, it is clear from comparing FIGS. 3 and 4 and FIGS. 5 and 6 that the male and female portions are intended to be tubular for both the preferred embodiment and the alternate embodiment. Clearly, if an element is tubular, gases can pass through the center of the element.

■ It is now specified that the male and female portions are located on one end of the first conduit and one end of the second conduit respectively.

This is what is shown in FIGS. 3 and 4 as filed (first embodiment) and
FIGS. 5 and 6 as filed (second embodiment).

Amended claim 10 now specifies that the first and second electrical
contacts (21a, 21b, 22a, 22b, for example) form part of the first electrical
element and the second electrical element, respectively. As described on
page 5, line 22 through page 6, line 6, in the preferred embodiment “the
heating element 30 within the conduit has two terminals or contacts 21a,
21b”. It is clear from this section that the terminals are part of the
elements. Therefore there is support for this amendment to claim 10.

- It is now specified in the final subparagraph of amended claim 10 that
when the male and female portions are connected, a gaseous connection is
formed between the first and second conduits. This arrangement is shown
in FIGS. 3 and 4 for the preferred embodiment, and FIGS. 5 and 6 for the
alternate embodiment. There is therefore support for this amendment to
claim 10.

With these amendments to the specification and claim 10, Applicant submits that the
objections and rejections are overcome. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims is
requested.

A Request for a Two-Month Extension of Time to extend the date for response up to and
including February 10, 2008 is concurrently submitted herewith.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact one of the undersigned attorneys at (312) 704-1890.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:

Raiford A. Blackstone, Jr.

Raiford A. Blackstone, Jr., Reg. No. 25,156

Linda L. Palomar, Reg. No. 37,903

TREXLER, BUSHNELL, GIANGIORGI,

BLACKSTONE & MARR, LTD.

105 W. Adams Street

Suite 3600

Chicago, Illinois 60603

9W0175 WPD